

Remarks

Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in light of the Remarks provided herein. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejections set forth in the Examiner's Office Action dated April 19, 2006, as the Examiner has not presented a prima facie case of obviousness.

In the Office Action, the Examiner relies on a new reference Tripp and rejects claims 1-3 and 5-25 under 35 USC Sec. 103 (a) as lacking non-obviousness. In particular, the Examiner points out that although Dickinson does not disclose the inquiry being performed simultaneously and the master server being pre-assigned, the Tripp prior art teaches the newly claimed traits. The applicant respectfully disagrees with the Examiner and explains herein below in more detail the differences between the claimed design and the Dickinson's design, the Tripp's design, and the combination thereof.

(1)

The Examiner first errs by concluding that the Tripp's design discloses the inquiry being performed simultaneously (claim 11, Tripp). The applicant respectfully submits that the meanings, as well as actual operation, of the word "simultaneously" in the claimed design and the Tripp's design are very different.

As claimed in claims 1 and 12 of the present application, *"the inquiry is simultaneously forwarded to one or more other servers having the same protocols established with the first server so that any search inquiry is simultaneously performed not only at the first server but also at said one or more other servers."* and *"so that any of said search inquiries is simultaneously performed not only at the server where the inquiry is placed, but also at least one of the other servers."*

To the contrary, the Tripp's design only discloses that *"updates and queries can occur simultaneously"* (claim 11, Tripp) and it is achieved by storing two copies for a segments of a list, one of the copies for a segment is available for updates, and the other copy for the segment is available for queries (claim 1, Tripp). It is not disclosed in Tripp that queries at many servers can be performed simultaneously.

Furthermore, as disclosed by the Tripp's design, a computing system with a key-ordered list of data objects distributed over a plurality of servers which allows discrete parallel processing on said servers comprises: a self contained key-ordered list of data objects; a plurality of memories in a plurality of servers, each memory containing a segment of the key-ordered list of data objects; and a query processor which receives queries and, based on data content of the query, directs each received query to one of said plurality (claim 1, Tripp). Given that, a Tripp's query from a server must be first sent to the query processor to detect its data content, and then forwarded to one of the servers based on the detected data content. Therefore, contrary to the Examiner's conclusion, Tripp's fails to disclose that a query is forwarded to many servers simultaneously.

For above reasons, the newly added trait related to the simultaneous transmission of a query to one or more servers is not taught by the Tripp. The Examiner's rejection based on Dickinson, in view of Tripp, is misapplied and should be withdrawn.

(2)

In the Office Action, the Examiner holds that the Dickinson's design teaches the master server of the claimed design in combination with the Tripp's design. Applicant respectfully traverses the Examiner's rejection. As explained herein below, the claimed master server is very different, both in nature and in function, from that of the Dickinson's design and the Tripp's design.

With regards to the Dickinson's design, the applicant submits that there are two significant differences in the master server between the claimed design and the Dickinson's design.

First, within the Dickinson's design, all the computers are able to serve as master servers or slave servers. The term "master server" means a server that holds master cards and the term "slave server" means a server that holds replicated cards. In other words, a master or slave is a relative concept according to the type of cards in Dickinson. It is a dynamic designation.

To the contrary, in the claimed design, *"the master server may coordinate the propagation of data synchronization of any updates between the slave servers."* And *"all of the updates or data of the slave servers may be transmitted to the master server for passing on to another or other desired slave services for synchronization of these updates therewith"* (Page 7, Lines 16-20). Therefore, the master server in the claimed design refers to a pre-assigned server that centrally controls the whole network of systems (i.e., controls the slave servers). The pre-assigned central control function described above is not disclosed by the master server in the Dickinson's design

Second, the master server in the claimed design is capable of transmitting any search inquiry to one or more designated slave servers (claim 2) and passing on any updates that a user placed at one of servers to designated servers (claim 3). As described in the description, *"the searcher can choose only one or more specific web card servers for the possible search. Such a selection can be based on any geographic regions, countries, states, provinces, cities, and so on"* (see Page 14, Lines 10-13). Similarly, *the updates are also sent to the servers that are entitled to know the information* (see Page 16, Lines 5-6). Therefore, in the claimed design, it can be designated or selected by the master server as to where a query or an update will be forwarded. To the contrary, the Dickinson's design does not teach technical features similar to that.

For the above two aspects, the difference of the master server between the claimed design and the Dickinson's design is not only in whether the master server is pre-assigned, but also in their different functions. The Dickinson's design does not teach the master server in the claimed design. Therefore, the Examiner's rejection based on Dickinson is misapplied.

Even if the master server in the Tripp's design could be pre-assigned, its function is still very different from that of the claimed design. Within the claimed design, it is claimed by claims 2 and 18 that *"there is one designated server among the plurality of servers that functions as a master server"*. It can be seen that the master server is one of said plurality of servers and thus also contains at least a database and a search engine. Furthermore, it is described in the description that a search can be performed in the master server as that performed in the slave servers.

To the contrary, within the Tripp's design (see Column 5, Lines 61-62), "*the master index server 218 only contains a copy of the central search index, which is compared with data content of the received query to determine which of the servers to be accessed*". Thus, the master index server does not contain a search engine and is different from other slave servers. Given that, the master index server in the Tripp's design is different in function from that in the claimed design, even if the master index server could be pre-assigned.

For the above reasons, the master server in the claimed design is not taught by the Dickinson's design, the Tripp's design or the combination thereof. Therefore, the claimed design is not obvious in view of Dickinson and Tripp.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as defined in the claims 1-3, 5-25 is not obvious in view of Dickinson and Tripp.

Conclusion.

In view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present invention as defined in the claims is novel over the Dickinson's design, and further is unobvious in view of Dickinson, and Tripp. It is respectfully requested that the rejections be withdrawn and the claims allowed in due course.

The Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned attorney to discuss any matter relating to the present application.

Respectfully submitted,



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